

# Shakespeare Tercentenary: 1616-1916

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### ODDS AGAINST SHAKESPEARE ON STAGE TODAY

This Is a Generation in Which Theatre Audiences Have Been Carefully Trained Away From Him

By Alexander Woolcott,

Dramatic Critic of THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WHAT is the attitude of the average American pay-as-they-enter audience in this tercentenary year 1916 toward the works of William Shakespeare? How fare his plays with those who do their theatre-going in the age of Ibsen, Hauptmann, Shaw, Galsworthy, Eugene Walter, and Edward Sheldon? These are the questions, and when you look to see, you find that the great Elizabethan is now speaking to a polite but alien house. You realize that now, as never before in the three centuries since his death, great inherent difficulties beset in the theatre the message from his heart to ours. You discover that, however unintentionally, there was a real meaning in the phrase of a local producer who lightly spoke of Master Will not long ago as "another foreign author."

To arrive at this not necessarily dispiriting conclusion, you turn your attention not merely to Shakespeare but to the audience itself. This has no reference, of course, to the precious crew which fills half the theatre on nearly every New York first night under the pleasant delusion that it represents America, and can say thumbs up or down on each new play that passes by. Nor does it refer to the good people scattered over the country who go to the play once every three years. Leave out of consideration such special audiences, wistfully hungry for culture, as the roving outdoor companies may assemble from the Summer schools and the multitudinous Chautauquas. Leave out of consideration all those who take their Shakespeare's seraphicness, attending because they think they ought, and not for the beauty and splendor and fun there is in him. Take, rather, the great body of playgoers that are neither precious nor unappreciative; folks who read Arnold Bennett and Margaret Deland, who love Maude Adams and are not to be sneezed at; folks who attend the theatre often enough to have some mental habit of play-going, who have had their taste in drama formed in our theatre during the last twenty-five years, and more particularly during the present century. What of them? For it is to them we must look if Shakespeare is to flourish on the stage—and not merely to his horror, in the library—in this, the three hundredth year since his death.

And between these people and his plays there has come a great gap, a breach that has widened rapidly in the last fifteen years. Merely to say that he has been dead three centuries is inadequately to express the idea. He had been dead 275 years: a quarter of a century ago; since then the span has doubled, trebled. Since then has come what may be called the modern drama, a complete, far-reaching revolution in dramatic art, the taking up of a new form and a new manner, the setting up of a new aim and a new ideal. The years in the theatre since 1810 are long just as the nineteenth century was long in the history of civilization, change, achievement—far longer, the new historians selfishly pointing out, than the Paleolithic Age, say, which in mere time extended rather longer than a hundred years. How radical has been this change you realize better when you consider that plays written in the sixties and seventies are more nearly contemporary with Shakespeare than "The Madras House," that incomplete work of genius which is more expensively characteristic of its time than any play written in our day in the English language. And the best plays of today differ from Shakespeare as sharply as his own differed from the deathless tragedies which were written on the shores of the Aegean when all the world was young.

Inevitably the presentation of poetic drama in the age of the naturalistic play encounters difficulties akin to those which beset acting in the old Academy of Music in Philadelphia. Playgoers there may remember that in the days when a loose little band of stars was valiantly and somewhat melodramatically fighting the theatrical syndicate, that spacious barn was the only auditorium open to them. The ordinarily dimensioned stage properties would struggle to the rear of the immense stage, and then between the place where castle or garden stopped and the place where the orchestra began there intervened a yawning apron a disheartening expanse across which the players—in the argot of their profession—had to "put" the play. Mr. Hackett yelled through "The Crisis," Miss Croaman must needs roar as Rosalind, and the great Mrs. Fluke—fancy it—Mrs. Fluke was obliged to reveal previously unsuspected lung power. This diffi-

culty was not insuperable. It could be overcome, but the gap was there. And so it is now in the relations between Shakespeare and a present-day audience in our country. An unmistakable, though not necessarily permanent, separation has taken place that simply must be reckoned with in terms of illusion and response. The gap is not insuperable, but it is there. It is a commonplace of dramatic criticism that the actor of our time has not been trained to give Shakespeare. Any dramatic critic over the age of three can say that, and, in fact, does say it whenever he is out of copy. What is equally true, and rather more a matter of concern, is that the audience has not been trained to take Shakespeare.

The audiences have been trained away from Shakespeare, not by the machinations of base managers impressed with evidence more recent than Chatterton's old cry that "Shakespeare spells ruin," but by the finest and most brilliant work done in



Laura Cowie with Forbes-Robertson as Ophelia in Hamlet

the modern theatre. They have been trained away by the playwrights, producers, and players of the naturalistic school, the men and women who try to represent their own day realistically, to put on the stage an action that has the form and color and sound, the authentic gesture and accent, of everyday life. Rebellion has reared its head in Germany. Atypical playwrights have spoken eloquently there and in Ireland and in Belgium, but the naturalistic school is none the less the determining force in the theatre today. It may not be tomorrow, but that is another story. The naturalistic school works quietly and with the fewest possible trappings. It speaks prose, and there is no poetry in it. It is the irony of fate that the Shakespeare Tercentenary should have come around in a generation that can regard "The Old Wives' Tale" as its greatest English novel and in a year whereof the best poetry is much too much like the Spoon River Anthology. The naturalistic school is typified in its conventions—chiefly the fourth-wall convention—those methods of procedure by which a produced play is conditioned, the terms of tacit agreement between playwright and playgoer which are in his mind and yours before ever the curtain rises. "Let's pretend," he says, as he puts pen to paper, and "Let's pretend," you say as you slide to your seat. That is always the agreement between you, but the terms differ in different generations. Now you go into the theatre assuming to the assumption that the fourth wall of a room has been withdrawn and that you are but an eavesdropper, made comfortable, unconsciously, that is your habit. Hence all the occasion for bursts of dissatisfaction with the photographic, stenographic drama of the day. Hence the infinite detail of some of the earlier Belasco realism, with its suggestion that all be needed was a good, big moving van. Hence the quiet, suppressed playing and all the subnormal acting that sneaks in under the fine name of restraint. Hence the actress who has occasionally been known to turn her back to the footlights and whisper her sentiments to the crafty backdrop in the fervor of her devotion to the missing fourth wall and its implicit denial of the audience's very existence.



E.H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe in Much Ado About Nothing

PHOTO BY WHITE



And in all this there is no place for Juliet talking to the moon and Hamlet talking into space. There is no place for the majesty of blank verse and the lavish outpouring of sheer word music, no place for paucity and impassioned monologue. It is only in the freemasonry that exists between children and Barrie that Peter Pan can call across the footlights. The aside, like the soliloquy and the incidental music is gone. It is gone not because it broke a rule, but because it broke the illusion. And Shakespeare is difficult for one of our audiences because if you would go along with him at all you must go on quite different terms. It is all a matter of the audience's habitual predisposition, and there has never been a time since the days



Sir Herbert Tree as Malvolio in Twelfth Night

of Burbage and the old Globe Theatre when the mental habits—not necessarily bad habits, mind you—of the playgoer offered such resistance to Shakespeare as they do today.

All this is no reflection of scholastic criticism. The fourth-wall convention has had its most potent effect on those who have never heard of it; it has conditioned the illusion even for the most remote and most naive, the son, perhaps, of that splendid, if somewhat disconcertingly responsive, playgoer who assaulted Armand at the op'ry house in Denver when he went to see "Modjesky ez Camel." The theatregoers of Utica, Akron, Des Moines, and points west are not so passionately devoted to the great Norwegian that they cannot see what a good fellow our Will Shakespeare was. Nonsense. Ibsen has never had any direct influence on playgoers in English-speaking countries, but the great pioneer always reaches the lesser fellows of his craft. Not only Shaw and Galsworthy, but the most shameless little potboiler on Broadway write their pieces under circumstances Ibsen helped mightily to create. And thus accustomed, the average American pay-as-they-enter playgoer audience in the year 1916 goes to the theatre in a frame of mind that is radically different because Mr. Ibsen wrote. It is that frame of mind with which the plays of Shakespeare must contend.

So much for the audience. What of the actor? There is the oft-repeated lament that in these days there are no actors to play Shakespeare even if your thrifty producers could be persuaded to give his plays and the public nourished a secret passion to see them on the stage. But it is really understating the case to say that the twentieth-century actor of the English-speaking stage has not been trained to play Shakespeare when the whole point is that he has been trained not to. By the stuff of which the present-day plays are made, by the implicit directions of the lines he speaks, by the atmosphere the best of the producers give to the plays they stage, by the standards that reputations set, and by your own applause and sympathy he is trained to prose and to soft speech and to a quiet, homely, everyday naturalness that would ill-comport with the superb verse, the magnificent declamations, the splendid trappings of the plays of Shakespeare.

"The eaves-dropping convention," gloomily observes Henry Arthur Jones, "is developing a school of admirable realistic actors, who can render with extreme nicety all those subtleties of the drawing room and the street which are scarcely worth rendering."

It seems probable that in the French Revolution many a simple, kindly, generous, socially-minded aristocrat perished on the guillotine. Certainly when the men of the theatre rose against all the hollow and spurious romance of the nineteenth century they made it hard thereafter for true romance to get a hearing. They have left the theatre one-sided, one-toned, limited, a little monotonous, and it is only a partial consolation to remember that, while we see little now of Booth's Shakespearean repertoire we see nothing at all of his "Richefeu." In the same way something of eloquence was killed in the war on grandiloquence and tall talking. Certainly when the swaggering, ranting actor, with all his sound and fury, went slinking out there was discouraged something of the personal magnificence, the individual grandeur which is needed to fill the amaranthine robes of Othello and make the Thane of Glamis live.

You see, all the forces of the modern stage have been mercilessly dedicated to

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the repression of the actor. A will tell you—he will even write an essay about it from time to time—that this is the age of the great playwright and, therefore, in the cycle in which such forces move no age for the great player. B—"wretched, meritorious B"—will prove to you that the incandescent lamp has done it all, that with electricity it is natural so to diffuse the light that the spotlight no longer hallows a single player at the expense of his fellows. It was an incorrigible greenroom wag who sent to another American star a marked wooden fragment of the now dismantled Wallack's so that he might forever keep and indulge his passion for the centre of the stage. But, after all, not many of our players do; there are few left concerning whom this exquisite humor would have any point. C comments on A and B by accounting for everything in the terms of the collapse of repertory. But they are all trying to explain the same thing, the dwindling of the player's stature, the new unpretentiousness which, for the great heroic roles, ill transmits the glory that was Rehan and the grandeur that was Booth. All this was in the mind of the writer in The London Times the other day who said: "You feel that something of Shakespeare's secret died with Ada Rehan."

Shakespearean productions we do have, to be sure. Scan the records of the last three seasons here and you find performance, good, bad, and indifferent, of no less than fourteen of the plays. Few were greatly satisfying, few prospered. With one exception they represented not the almost totally absent impulse to produce the great plays, but the impulse to play the great roles, an impulse that can find expression only with players of such matured reputation that they can have their own way. But remember that Mary Anderson's lovely twenties were only half spent when she played Rosalind at Stratford, and that Ada Rehan, when she electrified New York with her superb Shrew, was younger than Elsie Ferguson is now. A detailed study of the three years' record would yield light more on what we have had than on what we are likely to have in the seasons that lie just ahead. The hose of Sothern's cross-rigged gull and the dagger of Miss Marlowe's Juliet have passed under the hammer and Mr. Mantell has betaken himself to the movies. "Shakespeare is not dead but sleeping" was his parting shot, but he did not add as he might have done, that such productions as the ones he gave last year of "Romeo and Juliet," not merely training but scaring the audience away from Shakespeare, have helped to administer the sleeping draught.

Of the fourteen plays these recent years have brought to town there was but one great performance—Forbes-Robertson's Hamlet—and but one example of Shakespeare as a producer's contribution—the Barker production of "Midsummer Night's Dream," an eccentric presentation marked by the bewildering speed with which the players poured forth the incredibly abundant music of the text.

The simple folk out front, groundlings and gentry alike, said it was lovely and all that, but that they couldn't understand a word that was said. "Gabbling" was the term used by the teetotal London reviewers when the same experiment was tried on them, and Brother Barker, who had already raised his lament on the abandoned standard of beauty in the English language, on the falling off in the musical utterance of verse, responded chiddingly: "I call in question the evidence of mere policemen critics. I question a little their expertness of hearing, a little, too, their quickness of understanding Elizabethan English not at its easiest."

In other words, the loveliest Elizabethan poetry spoken by players untrained to speak it for the ears of men and women untrained to hear it. And there you have it—or part of it. It is this and something more. Poetry comes strange from lips and to ears attuned to the most matter-of-fact prose. "Yes, I know, that is so." The dramas of rhetoric, fashioned for the platform, adjust themselves but awkwardly to the picture-frame stage of our time. "Very true, so they do." And naturally in an average audience of today there reappears the spiritual descendant of one who found the first Lear dull, ("he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry or he sleeps"), the successor to silly Mr. Pepsys, who found the "Dream" at the King's Theatre "the most insipid, ridiculous play" he had ever seen.

But these are all only contributory elements in the decline of Shakespeare in terms of easy illusion, the spell of make-believe a great play can weave—and must weave—in the hearts of those to whom its story is unfolded. Every audience in the history of the theatre, from the Athenians, who revelled in Euripides at the Temple of Dionysius, the mixed crew that jostled happily in the yard at the first theatres in the parish of Shoreditch, the Londoners who sat rapt at Drury Lane before the at least archaeologically wet sisters in mittens, ruffs, and red stomachers who hovered over Garrick's caldron down to the devoted army that besieges the box office whenever the great Mr. Cohan writes a piece—all have gone to the play eager to pretend, hungry for reality, even the most calloused bringing to his seat remnants of that perfect faith the child gives in the nursery to the stirring story of Cinderella or Snowwhite, to the pathetic incident of Mother Hubbard. They must recognize humanity in the story unfolded on the stage. They want to weep with the tragedy, laugh with the comedy, glow with the romance. They want to believe; they want to enjoy THEMSELVES in the theatre. And the cheapest modern play, however hollow and spurious at heart, has at least the outward look and sound of every-day life which makes easy the pretense. Every development in the modern theatre, not only in the drama, but in the structure of the buildings and the mechanism of the world behind the scenes, gives aid to the will and power to pretend. The imagination is subverted in the playhouse today. It has been pampered and Shakespeare is a strain upon it. There is the heart of the matter.

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# THE ACTOR'S PROBLEMS WITH THE GREAT ROLES



George Cruikshanks drawing of Falstaff enacting the part of the King. ~ Henry IV Act II Scene IV



James K. Hackett as Macbeth

## Plenty of Great Hamlets, but No Great Macbeths---Why Tradition Is an Unsafe Guide

Written for THE NEW YORK TIMES  
By James K. Hackett.

I TRUST that the reader will clearly understand that anything I may write, especially regarding the character of Macbeth, does not apply in any sense to my interpretation, but solely to my conception—unfortunately conception and execution are two very different things.

In spite of the desire that every actor has to play Hamlet, and in spite of the wonderful opportunities open to him who essays the interpretation of that noble rôle, it has seemed to me that there are other Shakespearean parts which offer more difficult and perhaps more interesting problems. Hamlet is, in a sense, in spite of its complexities, so direct a character that it is difficult for an actor of ability absolutely to fail in the part. I do not think that there has ever been a really bad Hamlet, although, as the Kentucky Colonel so aptly said: "My dear Sir, there is no bad whisky; but some whisky is better than others." So it has been with Hamlet.

For one thing, Hamlet has all the appeal which belongs to a young and romantic figure. He is a Prince with all the distinction which royalty confers upon a man in the mind of even the most democratic, and he is a young man of noble impulses, suffering great and undeserved misfortune. So the actor who plays Hamlet has the sympathies of the audience from the start. But please do not understand me to mean that Hamlet is in any sense an easy rôle. It is not.

Even Othello has, at the beginning of the play, a certain sympathetic appeal to his audience, and, in my opinion, if properly interpreted, may in a certain sense retain that sympathy to the end.

One of the great Shakespearean critics (I think Schlegel) said the unpopularity of "Macbeth" was not difficult to understand, because Aristotle had said that tragedy requires two elements, horror and sympathy; that "Macbeth" was all horror and no sympathy. I am of the opinion that this is only partially true, but it is the duty of the actor to think when the author has forgotten to think, as another celebrated German, no less a personage than Goethe, said, and very justly so; and this applies very germanely to this tragedy. We must understand that we are using the word sympathy in its catholic sense. But there is in "Macbeth" a dominating spirit of evil, (as symbolized by the witches,) and to gain this effect I had the three witches speak in soprano tones, alto tones, and bass tones. Their speech and laughter are uttered in these same keys, and as their evil influence gradually dominates Macbeth, I have introduced at salient points in the development of the tragedy this laughter, heard from off the stage, their final triumphant cackle being heard at his dissolution and overthrow at the end of the play. I think I have, largely by this note, in a catholic sense, secured a certain sympathy for Macbeth. I might say, and I voice the opinion of a great many Christian Scientists, that this interpretation has a very strong appeal to adherents of that belief, because in spite of his physical downfall and ruin his spirit had triumphed.

To play Macbeth even adequately is a tremendous task. Macbeth is, I believe, the most exacting and most complex of all Shakespearean rôles. The complexities of execution alone are almost insolvable, and hardly any analysis by celebrated critics agree as to their conception. And yet Macbeth is the part which I take most pleasure in attempting to interpret. To prove my contention as to the difficulties presented by Macbeth it is only necessary to consult the history of the stage. Edwin Booth and many other actors live in the minds of men as great Hamlets, many actresses as great Lady Macbeths. My father lived as the greatest of Falstaffs; Salvini and Edmund Kean as the greatest of Othellos; but in the entire history of the drama you will not find a single actor who is remembered as a great Macbeth.

It is necessary in interpreting Macbeth to show that the play really has a villain. This spirit of evil I have symbolized by the witches, and they, in a certain sense, take the place of Iago in "Othello," or in put it rather bluntly, the so-called "heavy" which is essential in every melodrama. The effect of the play is utterly lost unless this evil influence is clearly indicated. If this be done, Macbeth is shown to be injured as well as injuring—to be the victim of evil powers, and this helps to create sympathy for him in a broad sense, and, perhaps, makes more clear to the auditor the mental transitions of Macbeth as the play progresses.

To gain another appeal for the humanity of the character, I have emphasized, as far

as possible, the great love between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. But these touches are apparently new notes in the interpretation. The aim of many actors seems to have been to make Macbeth absolutely inhuman, and it is therefore not difficult to understand why this play has not met with greater popular success. In one production, a distinguished one it was, too, Macbeth was not even allowed to touch Lady Macbeth's hand. How absolutely absurd that was! Why should players or the critics forget that Macbeth was a man and Lady Macbeth a woman, and that they were passionately in love?

The interpretation of Macbeth requires expenditure of more physical and mental energy than any other Shakespearean rôle. To say that it is exhausting is to put it too mildly.

The absence of comedy relief is another handicap in the gaining of popular appreciation. For with the exception of the drunken porter, "Macbeth" is devoid of comedy. On the other hand, let us consider the great relief contributed to "Romeo and Juliet" by Mercutio, whom Shakespeare (I think it was Garrick said) was obliged to kill, or Mercutio would have killed Romeo and Juliet.

I do not presume to say that "Macbeth" would be a better play if more humor had been introduced by the great poet. But I believe it to be true that the play would be more acceptable to the audiences of all time were a tragedy so sombre, and yet so



James Henry Hackett as Falstaff—Henry IV Act II Scene IV  
Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware instinct. (COURTESY OF JAMES K. HACKETT)

rapidly moving, relieved by a proportionate introduction of comedy.

And oh, Tradition! Of all stumbling blocks to progress in almost any line of brain endeavor in this world Tradition seems to be the pith of evil. We find it in our universities, in our law, even in our politics. Shakespeare himself, in writing the plays, threw all tradition of his time to the winds. Therefore, why should we not in our interpretations follow his illustrious example in the interpretations of the characters which he created, although in so doing we may bring down on our innocent but well-intentioned heads the sledge hammer of criticism? Let us make the attempt, even if we fail.

General Gordon of civil war fame told

when when I was a 10-year-old boy that for a long time he had wondered how he could walk and almost constantly halt the head of his troops at will when in marching order, and yet still on the tail end of the column off their feet to the point of exhaustion in their effort to keep up. This is probably a literal illustration of trying to follow in the footsteps of Tradition. The player of today who tries to do what the player of a century ago tried to do lacks not only personal knowledge of the motives and peculiar temperament which made that characterization appeal to audiences of that day, but he is apt to give an empty and meaningless representation. So let us if we can, become ancestors—not descendants.

Although I contend that Macbeth is the most difficult of Shakespearean tragic rôles, it is the one, nevertheless, which I most enjoy playing. Falstaff, which is diametrically opposed to Macbeth from every viewpoint, is probably the most difficult of all Shakespeare's comedy creations.

I may truthfully and confidentially say that I have absolutely no hope of success in that character. Why do it? you say. Sentiment and practicality. Some years before her death my mother begged me to play Falstaff if the opportunity to do so ever presented itself. I promised without any idea of ever being called upon to keep my promise, and told her that in the Autumn of my career I might attempt it. She suggested that I should first play the Falstaff of the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and afterward that of "Henry IV." When I made my co-starring agreement with Viola Allen she agreed to play Emilia in the forthcoming production of "Othello," and I said that in return I would play any one of Shakespeare's comedies that she might select. To my surprise she chose the "Merry Wives of Windsor."

Now, if a man happens to be the son of an actor who has achieved great fame in this rôle, he labors under a tremendous



Mrs. Siddons as Lady Macbeth, Act V Scene I  
Doctor: What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands

handicap when he essays it. And the handicap is even greater when he has not had the advantage of seeing the play presented by his father. His death occurred Dec. 31, 1871, when I was only 2 years of age, so all I know of his acting is based upon what my mother and his friends told me and on what I have read.

Although my father appeared in Richard III, and in nearly all the greatest Shakespearean rôles, his chief success was attained in his interpretation of Falstaff in "Henry IV," and it is upon his performance of that rôle that his fame rests. He himself has described in words which I venture here to quote the circumstances which led him to appear first as Falstaff. He wrote:

"Late in the month of May, 1831, while Charles Kean and myself were starring upon alternate nights at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and were fellow-guests at Head's Mansion House, then the famous hotel of that city, we strolled about the town together. In the course of our promenade Charles Kean asked me if I had ever thought of acting Falstaff. I replied that with such object I had partially studied the character." He observed, "I have a strong desire to play Hotspur, and if you will undertake to be ready within a week to make a first appearance in Falstaff I will essay Hotspur on the occasion for the first time also." We performed accordingly, and both were favorably received."

It may be interesting for the playgoers of this generation to know that after my father's performance of Falstaff his friends and the critics in general condemned him roundly for what they termed his new and extraordinary conception of the Fat Knight. They told him to abandon Falstaff or quit the stage if he had any regard for his reputation. He was so sensitive that for a time he was tempted to follow their advice. Fortunately, he thought better of it, and, after considering the matter carefully, he told his friends

that if he were not the accepted Falstaff after five years he would indeed retire from the stage. What happened is recorded on the pages of dramatic history. My father continued to play the Fat Knight for forty years thereafter. His last engagement was at Booth's Theatre, New York, in the latter part of 1871.

To make up for the Fat Knight in a convincing fashion is a very difficult task, and I am still struggling with pads and other accessories in an effort to give my figure the proper rotundity. I have not yet succeeded, but I have hopes. I have, after many attempts, succeeded in having a wig made that will, I think, be very effective. Incidentally in trying on this wig in my dressing gown recently I received a curious sort of shock—for it was my father's face that came to me out of the mirror.

Falstaff in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" is not a part of the greatest difficulty, because it is almost a straight comedy rôle, but in "Henry IV," while the character is essentially comic, there is a decidedly ironical touch running through it which makes it more difficult to play. In the "Merry Wives of Windsor" Shakespeare seems to be always making fun of himself—to be ridiculing his own creation. He wrote "Henry IV," and Queen Elizabeth, it is said, was particularly taken by the character of Falstaff. "Let us have the Fat Knight in love," she said; so Shakespeare wrote the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and in a way almost burlesqued the Falstaff of "Henry IV."

Falstaff is a difficult part to play—a complex part, full of subtle shadings and conflicting ideas, and Macbeth is a difficult part for the reasons that I have tried to describe. So Shakespeare's greatest humorous character and his greatest tragic character share, in spite of their numerous and extensive differences, this one quality of being difficult to interpret.

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### "In the Liver Vein"

To the Editor of The New York Times:  
THERE has been much misinterpretation of Shakespeare's use of the word "liver" in his plays. In "Love's Labour's Lost," for instance, Shakespeare makes Biron exclaim, on overhearing Longaville reciting his sonnet:

"This is in the liver vein which makes flesh a deity."

Some time ago I looked up the notes to this in variorum editions of Shakespeare and found that they stated that the word "liver" was in his day frequently used for love. This is incorrect.

Even from Plato's time there were believed to be several seats of the different forms of passion. The brain was given as that of love such as is felt toward Saints, Christ, the Virgin, and toward heroes; the heart as the seat for normal love and the liver as the seat of mere lust.

These different seats of passion are acknowledged by Shakespeare in lines near the opening of "Twelfth Night":

O, she that hath a heart that fine frame To pay this debt of love but to a brother. How will she love, when the rich golden shaft Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else That live in her; when liver, brain and heart, These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and fill'd Her sweet perfection with one self king!

The word "liver" also is used in the same sense as in this passage, in "The Rape of Lucrece," and in others of Shakespeare's works.

WILLIAM SARTAIN.

### Shakespeare's Portrait

(Prefixed as a frontispiece to the first edition of his Works in folio, 1623.)  
To the Reader.

THIS figure that thou here seest put, It was for gentle Shakespeare cut. Wherein the graver had a strife With nature, to outdo the life: O could he but have drawn his wit As well in brass as he has hit His face; the print would then surpass All that was ever writ in brass: But since he cannot, reader, look Not on his picture, but his book.

—Ben Jonson.



# THE SHAKESPEARE MISS MATTHISON HAS KNOWN



Henry VIII—Act I, Scene II. Sir Herbert Tree as Wolsey, Lyn Harding as the King, Edith Wynne Matthison as Katharine King. *By my life, 'Tis is against our pleasure*



Miss Matthison as Ophelia

and universities. At Drury Lane and the Whitechapel Town Hall. At the New Theatre and the People's Institute. And my experience has been that everywhere, and under every sort of condition, the play has reached the audience and moved it to laughter and tears, to stillness and to applause.

Of course, one's own personal feelings may find preference for a particular kind of production. My own desire has always been for the amount of scenery that shall put the audience into the right mood to receive the value of the acting, and so get the true idea of the play itself. Any method of production that distracts the mind of the audience from the acting, whether it be an affected and archaic simplicity or an overplus of scenic realism, is distasteful to me. Scenery should be a help both to actor and audience—not a hindrance.

For instance, I have played the chorus of "Henry V." in two ways. In the one, with a scenic production, I was discovered dressed in a beautiful Greek robe, standing on a pedestal, with amber electric lights turned full upon me. The strongly lighted picture hypnotized the eyes of the audience, and I knew they lost a great amount of the words I was saying; not that it mattered, because my apologies for the lack of scenic effects were obviously under the circumstances superfluous.

In the second production, put on by William Poel, of the Elizabethan Stage Society in England, for Ben Greet, I was dressed as an Elizabethan student; and I walked briskly to the front of the stage, and simply talked the lines in the audience, apologizing for our lack of scenery, men, and horses, telling them to "work their minds" and to "think"—very much as the chorus did in "The Yellow Jacket." It was infinitely more interesting, and I felt much happier in this second production, because I knew I was talking intelligently, that every word I was saying was vital to the play, and that the audience was held. Nor did I feel that any of the poetry was lost, because the enthusiasm of the subject lifted the speeches up out of the merely commonplace, and gave the right poetical flavor, just as great orators always acquire a certain large rhythm and poetry as they warm to their subject.

I always feel that blank verse was the ordinary speech of Elizabethans—only a little more so. It was the perception of this and the masterful ordering of it that justifies it as an art-form in Shakespeare; even as today our best playwrights make their prose plays the rightly comprehended music of these times we live in now every rhythm being studied and rendered with the same scrupulous accuracy as in the case of blank, or for that matter lyrical, verse. This is surely true of Shaw and Barrie, Vaughn Moody, Edward Sheldon, Githa Sowerby, John Masefield, Kennedy, and a host of others. Whether perceived by audience or not, it is a fact recognized and deeply appreciated by the actors who have to speak their lines. Thank goodness, this sense of the music underlying the "realistic" emotions of the day is bringing back to the drama, among other valuable things, the legitimate "long speech," the secret of which consists in manifesting the meaning of life through a rhythm which is life's also. What I mean is that music in language is not a fad of the artist's choice, but a reality in nature perceived by him.

Continentalers have never really lost the long speech in drama; but Anglo-Saxons, delivered over to a devil of smartness, have all too frequently been content with chippy monosyllables, cheap epigrams, and the never-ending banalities of the drawing-room tea and whisky-and-siphon fashionable drama. That such expression is in a sense true to the couple of rhythms and the three or four tones of metropolitan society life, I grant; but after long surfeit of it is a joy to turn once more to the high music and the multitudinous cadences shared by God's common people and the mighty singers. He has sent us.

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## To Shakespeare

Written for THE NEW YORK TIMES BY MABEL LIVINGSTON FRANK.

IF YOU had known three centuries ago How when life ended you would live again, How through the ages you would speak to men, Forever as the seasons come and go— If you had known your voice would still be heard In the deep silence of the star-lit night, Within the valley or the wind-swept height, Could you have altered one unending word If you had known?

## Shakespeare and Milton

THE tongue of England, that which myriads Have spoken and will speak, were hereafter, but two mighty men stand forth Above the flight of ages, two alone; One crying out, All nations spoke through me. The other: True; and through this trumpet burst God's word; the fall of angels, and the doom First of immortal, then of mortal, Man, Glory! be glory! not to me, to God.

—Walter Savage Landor

## Great Enough to be Rightly Interpreted in Many Different Ways

WRITTEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES BY Edith Wynne Matthison.

SO many words have been written and spoken about Shakespeare that it seems impossible I should be able to add anything of value. To gild the rose and to paint the lily have always appeared to me very useless and conceited occupations; and so I will speak only of what Shakespeare has meant to me in my own actor's life and work. And in giving this personal account I am sure I shall be echoing what many of my fellow-craftsmen have experienced.

My first introduction to Shakespeare when a very small child was a marvellous picture-book I found among my father's treasures. In it there were fascinating pictures of fairies, resplendent kings and queens, leopards in their motley; and glorious monsters that made my blood creep. So entrancing were they that I stumbled through the many difficult and unknown words to find out all about them. To my delight the stories were as worthy as the pictures, and I returned to them again and again, always with fresh eagerness.

Acting having happened in the family, when I was 10 years old I had already learned what "acting" meant, and it became my best-loved game. My father had spoken to me of Mrs. Siddons and had shown me the pictures of her in our Birmingham Municipal Art Gallery. From him I heard the story of her heart-piercing sobs in the sleep-walking scene, the unshaken writhing of her blood-stained hands, her horror-stricken eyes, and, needless to say, Lady Macbeth became my favorite role. Besides, she was not so conscientiously dressed for the part as bedtimes every night! To play the luck-stricken spouse of Cawdor was the earliest of my ambitions, and she is one of the few Shakespearean parts I have never played.

When, a little later, I went to school, to my joyous surprise I found that Shakespeare's plays were a part of my studies. Fortunately, I had a teacher who was an inspiration, and the plays lost none of their human and dramatic values under her instruction.

About this time, being quite an efficient ten-year-old, she could give me a list of thirteen or with three live brothers in the house and no sister—my chief desire was to blossom forth as Brutus. As it was, I could recite the Brutus and Cassius quarrel scene with great gusto, and frequently did—to my poor soul patient enough to listen to me, feeling at that time only plain black and white, and none of the subtle shades in-between of character and emotion. I know that my Brutus was overwhelmingly "pale" and my Cassius correspondingly "meat." That they quarreled like a couple of modern English schoolboys at my hands was, perhaps, not the whole truth of the matter; but I have always congratulated myself that at least they did not quarrel like two schoolgirls.

Later I was allowed to choose what plays I would go and see, having grown beyond the annual Christmas pantomime. My first choice fell on "A Midsummer Night's Dream," played by the F. B. Benson Company. It was performed with Mendelssohn's music, and the whole effect was very charming. Beautiful Dorothy Dene, the actress for many of Sir Frederick Leighton's pictures, was the Helena. I can see her now, as she came down the steps of the palace in the first act, with a heavenly blue drapery and her wonderful body moving like a Greek statue come to life.

Of course, I lost my heart to Oberon. Was he not my fairy king out of the picture-book come true? The enchantment of my childhood still hung over him. Little did I then dream that some day I should see gossamer wings and spanned webs and be an Oberon myself.

George Weir was excellent as Bottom the Weaver, full of untamed humor and unctuousness—a perfect performance. Later still, I saw "The Winter's Tale" acted by the Ben Greet Company, and this made an even deeper impression on me. H. B. Irving was the Leontes, and a very good Leontes he was, even in those early days of his career. The delightful Florisel and Perdita of Frank Rodney and Winifred Fraser—a young slip of a girl—remain with particular fragrance in my memory; and the whole performance, as I remember it, was a very good all-round one.

Then came "The Tempest" played by the Benson Company, but I did not see so much of the glamour from either the bigger productions as I did under the



Miss Matthison as Hermione

PHOTO BY ALICE BOUGHTON



Miss Matthison as Portia

one; and not until the end, when, broken and crushed, he faltered.

"Nay, take my life and all," could I feel a gleam of pity.

It was Sir Henry's custom always to answer any communication immediately on receipt, and after my first performance of Portia with him, being too shy to speak to him by word of mouth, I wrote him a little note to thank him for all the trouble he had taken with me over the part. In reply I received by special messenger the following letter. Need I say how proud and glad it made me?

29 Bedford Street, W. C.  
My dear Miss Wynne Matthison:  
I thank you for your sweet letter and for a beautiful performance of Portia. You really owe me thanks to me, and believe me,  
Truly yours,  
HENRY IRVING.

21st Sept., 1904.  
I suppose one of the attractions in playing most of Shakespeare's heroines is the fact that one can be entirely fascinating and interesting—though decent. Some of Shakespeare's successors in the art of playwriting, even today, have not been so scrupulous. Probably the technical difficulty of such a task prevents some of them. Barrie, of course, has given us his Magpie Shand, his Lady Babbie, Alice-sit-by-the-fire, and others; but few have created women to compare with Rosalind and Juliet, Hermione and Viola, Portia and Beatrice, Cymbeline and Isabella, in the respect I have named. There are signs of an awakening, however.

There has been a theory in theatrical quarters, both in England and America, that playing in Shakespeare uplifts an actor for modern roles. My own experience has been so varied in the matter of plays, ranging from Greek drama through the mystery and morality plays, Shakespeare and the other Elizabethans, Oliver Goldsmith, Sheridan, Balzac, Lytton, to Pinero, Shaw, Galsworthy, Maeterlinck, and Kennedy, that perhaps I may be permitted to speak on this subject. I believe that, as the greater contains the less, the actor who can really play Shakespeare has therefore the power to adapt himself to the most modern of dramas. Ellen Terry, for instance, whose Portia and Beatrice shine in our memories with an unsurpassable radiance, had no difficulty in playing Cicely Waynflete in "Captain Brassbound's Conversion." And of course I might multiply instances.

Surely work that stimulates the imagination, gives mobility to the body, fluency to the voice, and teaches the actor to speak the author's lines intelligently and musically must be the best kind of training for any stage demands. In Shakespeare's plays, all the parts are good ones and all of them are significant, and therefore, the work is always interesting even to the "small-part man." If he be an artist and appreciate himself as a necessary and important member of a beautiful and complete structure. The trouble with the merely modern actor when he attempts Shakespeare springs very often from his very right—if ill-directed—desire to be what is called "natural." But "natural"

does not necessarily mean commonplace and dull. On the other hand, to escape this pitfall by putting on what is considered to be "the Shakespearean method," he often becomes artificial, insincere, and melodramatic.

The speaking of verse is not an outside adornment; it must be the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. First of all, the actor has to create again the author's character, and make it a living, breathing human being; so expressing it through his own spirit, soul, and body that everything he does and says will make the audience believe that such a person would do and say exactly those things in just that way and no other. Then he has to give the clear meaning of the author's words, with a simple and unaffected pronunciation, right emotion and sense of scene; and when he has done all this, he will generally find that the technical qualities of time and rhythm have been practically achieved. In illustration of the above, I have never heard Beatrice's speech after the Arbor Scene commencing

"What fire is in mine ears," spoken more exquisitely than by Laura Hope Crews in John Drew's recent revival of "Much Ado About Nothing." In diction, rhythm, richness of intellectual and emotional meaning—above, all, in a sense of perfectly balanced song—she was a joy to every one who heard her.

The poetry of Shakespeare is as varied as the sounds of the universe, from the rounded periods of the earlier plays to the glorified natural conversation of the later ones; from the perfect lyrical ecstasies of the songs to the dramatic outpourings of the sonnets. One precious memory of a sonnet spoken with a full sense of its dramatic characterization comes back to me at this moment. It was at a luncheon given by the New Theatre in honor of the late Dr. Horace Howard Furness, and it was he who spoke it. From the tragic beginning—

When, in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
To the triumphant ending—  
For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth brings  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings—

It was the perfect expression of a tortured human soul being lifted by love from the misery of its own humiliation and despair to the highest heaven of ecstasy. It was all rendered with such truth, such poignancy, by the great old scholar that it plucked at our very heartstrings.

It was through a mutual friend that I had the great privilege of meeting Dr. Furness, when I first came to this country thirteen years ago, and whenever I was in Philadelphia I always went out to Wallingford to see him. Many were the long talks we had in his wonderful study about our beloved Shakespeare. I remember one, when I was playing Hermione in the New Theatre production of "The Winter's Tale"—a production of such beauty and humanity that I shall always feel grateful to Mr. Winthrop Ames for giving me the opportunity of playing in it. Naturally, with Dr.



# HOW PRESIDENT ADAMS WANTED JULIET PLAYED



Charlotte Cushman as Romeo, Susan Cushman as Juliet - (From "Shakespeare on the Stage" by William Winter)

## In His Day They Gave Lear a 'Happy Ending'—He Was Severe on Desdemona

By John Quincy Adams,  
Sixth President of the United States.

From the correspondence between himself and James Henry Hackett, published in Hackett's "Notes and Comments Upon Shakespeare."

MY admiration of Shakespeare, as a profound delineator of human nature and a sublime poet, is but little short of idolatry. I think he is often misunderstood as performed on the stage.

The character of Juliet, for example, is travestied almost into burlesque by the alteration of the text in the scene when the nurse, with so much precision, fixes her age. (Act I, Scene 3.) The nurse declares she knows it to an hour, and that next Lammass Eve (which Lady Capulet says will be to a fortnight and odd days) she will be fourteen. Upon this precise age, the character of Juliet, her discourse, her passion, and the deep pathos of the interest that we take in her fate very largely repose.

Born under Italian skies, she is at the very moment of transition from the child to the woman. Her love is the pure impulse of intellect, sensitive nature—first love—unconscious and undeliberated nature, childhood expanding into maturity, physical and intellectual—all innocence, all ardor, all ecstasy. How irresistibly are our sympathies moved as seeing the blossoms blazed at the very moment while it is opening to the sun! As the play is performed on the stage, the nurse, instead of saying that Juliet, at the next Lammass Eve, will be fourteen, says she will be nineteen.

Nineteen! In what country of the world was a young lady of nineteen ever constantly attended by a nurse? Between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, a nurse, in a noble Italian family of the Middle Ages, was not yet an unnatural compassion. On the verge of nineteen the nurse is not only superfluous, but very much out of place.

her greatest charm. In what but in that, and in everything which she does and says, congenial to that age, does she differ from Viola, from Miranda, from Ophelia, and indeed from all the lovely daughters of Shakespeare's muse? They are all in love, but you can never mistake one of them for another. The peculiarities of Juliet all have reference to her age; and that which in her mouth is enchanting, would seem but frothy nonsense from a woman five years older. Juliet says:

And when Romeo dies,  
Take him and cut him up in little stars,  
And he shall make the face of Heaven so fine,  
That all the world shall grow in love with night,  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

In the incomparable beauty of this passage, as spoken by a girl under fourteen, there is something too childish for a woman of nineteen, however desperately in love. One who has been accustomed to personate Juliet as a young woman of nineteen, may see incongruity with that age in her character; yet that one, who has herself passed through both those stages of life, should not understand the difference of maturity between the ages of fourteen and of nineteen in the female sex is scarcely conceivable. That Shakespeare should have confounded them is impossible. That he intended to make the age of Juliet an exposition of her character is evident from the special care he has taken to make the nurse announce it. If the means of dramatists were to undertake to write a tragedy, and to draw the character and to repeat the discourse of a girl of fourteen, attended throughout the play by a nurse, can we imagine that he would change the age to nineteen and yet retain the nurse, and give to the full-formed woman the same character and the same tone of discourse which he would to the ripening child of fourteen? Such a writer would proclaim himself as poor a proficient in the school

of human nature as in that of Shakespeare. In that ever-memorable delineation of the life of man and its division into "seven ages," by Jacques, in the comedy of "As You Like It," the meditative moralist says that each man in his turn plays many parts. He says, too, that all the men and women are merely players. In coming to the details he exhibits only the seven ages of the man, but there was certainly in the mind of the poet a corresponding division in the ages of the woman; and Juliet, at any age short of fourteen, and yet under the care of a nurse, partakes at once, in the relation of her sex, of the schoolboy with his satchel and shining morning face, creeping like a small unwillingly to school, and of the lover sighing like a furnace, with a woeful ballad made to his mistress's eyebrow. Shakespeare was not the observer and painter of nature, to confound them together. If he had exhibited in action a schoolboy of between thirteen and fourteen, think you that he would have given him the features or inspired him with the language and ideas of a lover at nineteen? Our youth at fourteen are yet under the age of judging from the school to the university; at nineteen, many of them have already closed their career at the university and passed into the busy scenes of active life. The female mind and person hastens also to maturity in advance of the male, and a woman at nineteen is generally more completely formed than a man at twenty-one.

Lear, Act I, Scene I.  
*Cordelia. Use well our father: To your professed bosoms I commit him.* PAINTED BY EDWIN A. ARNEY  
© BY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

formed upon the stage. For instance, "Othello" and "Lear"; both of which abound in beauty of detail, in poetical passages, in highly wrought and consistently preserved characters. But the pleasure that we take in witnessing a performance upon the stage depends much upon the sympathy that we feel with the sufferings and enjoyments of the good characters represented, and upon the punishment of the bad. We never can sympathize much with Desdemona or with Lear, because we never can separate them from the estimate that the lady is little less than a wanton, and the old king nothing less than a dotard.

Who can sympathize with the love of Desdemona? The daughter of a Venetian nobleman, born and educated to a splendid and lofty station in the community, she falls in love and makes a runaway match with a blackamoor, for no better reason than that he has told her a brazen story of his hairbreadth escapes in war. For this, she not only violates her duties to her father, her family, her sex, and her country, but she makes the first advances. She tells Othello she wished Heaven had made her such a man, and informs him how any friend of his may win her by telling her again his story. On that hint, says he, I spoke; and well he might. The blood must circulate briskly in the veins of a young woman, so fascinated, and so coming to the tale of a rude, unbleached African soldier.

The great moral lesson of the tragedy of Othello is, that black and white blood cannot be intermingled in marriage without a gross outrage upon the law of Nature; and that, in such violations, Nature will vindicate her laws. The moral of Othello is not to beware of jealousy, for jealousy is well founded in the character and conduct of his wife, though not in the fact of her infidelity with Cassio. Desdemona is not false to her husband, but she had been false to the purity and delicacy of her sex and condition when she married him; and the last words spoken by her father on parting from them, after he has forgiven her and acquiesced in the marriage, are:

I'll hold thee any wager,  
When we are both appear'd like young men,  
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,  
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,  
And speak between the change of man and boy  
With a reed voice; and turn two mining  
Into a many stride; and speak of frays  
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint  
How honorable ladies sought my love,  
Which I denying, they fell sick and died,  
I could not do without, than I'll repent  
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd  
them—  
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,  
That man hereafter I've discountenanc'd school  
About a twelvemonth.

Tragedy, according to the admirable definition of Aristotle, is a poem imitative of human life, and the object of which is to purify the soul of the spectator by the agency of terror and pity. The terror is excited by the incidents of the story and the sufferings of the person represented; the pity, by the interest of sympathy with their characters. Terror and pity are moved by the mere aspect of human sufferings; but the sympathy is strong or weak, in proportion to the interest that we take in the character of the sufferer. With this definition of tragedy, "Romeo and Juliet" is a drama of the highest order. The incidents of terror and the sufferings of the principal persons of the drama arouse every sympathy with Juliet. She unites all the interest of ecstatic love, of unexampled calamity, and of the peculiar tenderness which the heart feels for innocents in childhood. Most truly, then, says the Prince of Verona, at the conclusion of the play:

For never was a story of more woe  
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

The age of Juliet seems to be the key to her character throughout the play, an essential ingredient in the intense sympathy which she inspires; and Shakespeare has marked it, not only in her discourse, but even in her name, the diminutive tender affections applied only to childhood. If Shakespeare had exhibited upon the stage a woman of nineteen, he would have dismissed her nurse and called her Julia. She might still have been a very interesting character, but the whole color and complexion of the play must have been changed. An intelligent, virtuous woman, in love with a youth of asserted age and congenial character, is always a person of deep interest in the drama. But that interest is heightened and redoubled when, to the sympathy with the lover, you add all the kind affections with which you share in the joys and sorrows of the child. There is childishness in the discourse of Juliet, and the poet has shown us why; because she had scarcely ceased to be a child. There is nonsense in the alteration of Shakespeare's text upon the stage.

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Charlotte Vandenhoff, as Juliet - - - (1836)

play, and his insanity commences with such revolting injustice to his only affectionate daughter, that we feel but little compassion for whatever may afterward befall him.

The interesting character of the play is Cordelia; and what a lovely character it is! But the restoration of a dotard from old age to his senses is as much out of nature as the restoration to his throne is preposterous. Lear, as Shakespeare painted him, is the wreck of a mighty mind and proud spirit, sunk from despotic power into dotage, and maddened by the calamitous consequences of his own imbecility. His madness, with lucid flashes of intellect, is incurable. It is terrible! It is pitiable! But it is its effect on the fortunes and fate

of Cordelia that constitutes the chief interest of the spectator; and Lear himself, from his first appearance, loses all title to compassion.

The chief import of these objections to the manner in which Shakespeare's plays are represented upon the stage, is to vindicate the great "master of the drama" from the liberties taken by stage managers with his text. In "Romeo and Juliet," the alteration of a single word—the substitution of nineteen for fourteen—changes the whole character of the play—makes that, which is a perfect imitation of nature, incongruous absurdity, and takes from one of the loveliest creations of Shakespeare half her charm.

## Mrs. Jameson on Queen Elinor

From "Characteristics of Women."

ELINOR of Guienne and Blanche of Castile, who form part of the group around Constance, are sketches merely, but they are strictly historical portraits and full of truth and spirit.

At the period when Shakespeare has brought these three women on the scene together Elinor of Guienne (the daughter of the last Duke of Guienne and Aquitaine, and like Constance the heiress of a sovereign duchy) was near the close of her long, various, and unquiet life—she was nearly 70, and, as in early youth, her violent passions had overborne both principle and policy, so in her old age we see the same character, only modified by time; her strong intellect and love of power, unbridled by conscience or principle, surviving when other passions were extinguished, and rendered more dangerous by a degree of subtlety and self-command to which her youth had been a stranger. Her personal and avowed hatred for Constance, together with its motives, are mentioned by the old historians. Holinshed expressly says that Queen Elinor was mightily set against her grandson Arthur, rather moved thereto by envy conceived against his mother than by any fault of the young prince, for that she knew and dreaded the high spirit of the Lady Constance.

Shakespeare has rendered this with equal spirit and fidelity:

Queen Elinor.  
What now, my son! have I not ever said,  
How that ambitious Constance would not  
Till she had kindled France and all the  
world

Upon the right and party of her son? This might have been prevented and made whole  
With every easy argument of love. Which how the manage of two kingdoms must  
With fearful bloody issue arbitrate.  
King John.  
Our strong possession and our right for us!  
Queen Elinor.  
Your strong possession much more than  
Or else it must go wrong with you and me.  
So much my conscience whispers in your ear—  
Which none but Heaven and you and I shall hear.

Queen Elinor preserved to the end of her life her influence over her children, and appears to have merited their respect. While intrusted with the government, during the absence of Richard I., she ruled with a steady hand and made herself exceedingly popular; and so long as she lived to direct the councils of her son John his affairs prospered. For that intemperate jealousy which converted her into a domestic firebrand there was at least much cause, though little excuse. Elinor had hated and wronged the husband of her youth, and she had afterward to endure the negligence and innumerable infidelities of the husband whom she passionately loved—and so the whirligig of time brought in his revenges." Elinor died in 1233, a few months after Constance, and before the murder of Arthur—a crime which, had she lived, would probably never have been consummated, for the nature of Elinor, though violent, had no tincture of the baseness and cruelty of her son.